

Tiffany Caron

Bristol, CT 06010

Personal Care Attendant

In favor of bill 5433 collective bargaining for home care workers

My name is Tiffany Caron and I'm a home care worker from Bristol. I'm not just a PCA though, I also used to be a consumer. I was in a really bad car accident many years ago and had PCA's who helped me recover. I've been a PCA for 16 years now, so I know what it's like to be on both sides.

Right now our system is not working very well for PCA's and that means it's not working great for consumers either. Without having health insurance we have no way to take care of ourselves when we get sick or injured and there isn't a way for consumers to easily find someone who can fill in for us when we're sick or have to take a day off. That means consumers go without the care they need or we come to work when we're sick and run the risk of making our consumer sick too.

Being able to bargain with the state means we have somewhere to go to improve our working situation. We can work with the state to get health insurance and workman's comp and sick time. That way we can take better care of our consumers. I also really want to make sure we have some kind of registry so our consumers can have a way to find temporary workers if they need them so they're always getting the care they need.

I support this collective bargaining bill because it just doesn't make sense not to protect the workers that care for our loved ones.

***Sandra Prince, Personal Care Assistant  
Support Bill #5433  
Hartford, Conn.***

My name is Sandra Prince and I've been a home care provider for three years. I love the work. I love caring for people. I really enjoy helping someone. It's the love, I do it out of love. Even when I'm just talking with someone and giving them my time, they so appreciate it. It's good for me.

I help my consumer with everything she needs. I bathe her, change her, fix her meals, clean house, make sure meds are taken, and talk with her. I work weekends and holidays. When we had a blizzard I came to help her; I fell and hurt myself on the way but got up and came in. I've come to work through all of this because she needs me and that's my job.

In this job, I get to take good care of my consumer. I spend my days taking care of everyone else, but right now there is no one looking out for me.

PCAs don't get any kind of health insurance. I was in pain and stayed in pain because I didn't have insurance. It finally got so bad that one Sunday morning I went to St Francis and they took care of me right away. They said my gall bladder had gangrene. I could have died if I hadn't gone to the hospital when I did, now I have a lot of medical bills I can't afford to pay.

I'd like to get more hours. But also, I would like some appreciation for my commitment. I work holidays for no additional pay at all, and that doesn't seem right. I am thankful for this job and I love it. I give very personal care and I don't mind but I would just like fair pay for it.

I would love to stay with this job. I would like this to be my career. I love this work. But we need to fix this system. We need benefits, we need sick days. We have nobody working for us.

We need a union and the ability to bargain with the state because we need a voice. And our consumers need a stringer voice too and if we all get together we can all help each other.